United Nations A/59/PV.112

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

112nd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 12 July 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

*President*: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

**Agenda item 53 (*continued*)**

**Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters**

**Draft resolution (A/59/L.64)**

**Mr. Rock** (Canada): Canada welcomes this opportunity to express its views about proposed changes in the membership and working methods of the Security Council. These issues arise as we are discussing a wide range of proposals that leaders will take up when they meet here in September. Let me say at the outset that, while Canada regards Security Council enlargement as a worthy objective, we urge Member States not to allow this single issue to distract us unduly from the many other crucial subjects with which we want leaders to deal decisively in September. Those subjects include concrete measures to achieve the Millennium Development Goals; practical steps to protect the safety and security of our citizens, wherever they may live; renewed efforts to achieve recognition and enforcement of human rights; and proposals to render the management of the United Nations more effective, more transparent and more accountable.

I speak frankly in saying that that bundle of bold and broad proposals is more urgent than changes in the composition of the Security Council. We therefore urge colleagues, as we debate and decide the pending draft resolution, not to lose sight of the world's true priorities, which are found on that pressing agenda that our citizens are counting on us to address and to deliver on in September.

(*spoke in French*)

Having said that, let me turn to the matter under discussion today. Canada agrees that the Security Council should be expanded. We agree that various regions of the world should be more fairly represented on the Council; that there should be more frequent and enhanced participation by medium-sized and small States; and that the duration of mandates should be examined and the possibility of consecutive re-election should be considered. We also agree that the Council's working methods should be modernized to make them more transparent, more inclusive and more responsive.

(*spoke in English*)

But there is one feature of the draft resolution before us with which Canada cannot agree: we are steadfastly opposed to the addition of new permanent members to the Security Council. My comments must not be taken to mean that I am questioning the worthiness of the nations that seek those permanent seats or the sincerity and good faith of their efforts and those of the other sponsors of draft resolution A/59/L.64. Each of the aspirants has demonstrated a real and profound commitment to this institution, and each has served with great distinction in the Assembly and, indeed, as an elected member of the Security Council. And Canada is proud to call each of them a

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

05-41615 (E)

friend. However, I speak in support of principles that Canada believes in strongly — principles that we believe must govern the way in which we renew and improve the Security Council and its method of working.

The permanent members of the Council took their seats in a distant and very different age. The forces that shaped the post-war creation of the United Nations were unique to that time. Circumstances have changed. Regional balances have shifted. The world's needs and challenges have evolved. Whatever the merits of the formula devised in 1945 may have been at that time, the vast differences in today's reality must be reflected in the approach we take to Security Council reform today.

I am speaking not only about shifts in population and relative power. I am referring also to the emergence of values that are now fostered and cherished here and throughout the world: values such as democracy, accountability, flexibility and fairness — values that do not favour a widened notion of two-tiered privileges in the world's only institution of global reach and universal membership. In that context, the Council of 1945 must be seen as an anomaly to be accommodated, not as a model to be emulated.

Canada believes, as a matter of principle, that the accession of additional permanent members to the Security Council would not be in the best interests of this institution or in the long-term best interests of the overwhelming majority of its Member States. It would betray the values that Member States have developed over time. It would deny a fair and flexible allocation of seats. It would diminish the accountability of the Council at a time when that virtue is most needed. It would deprive the world's regions of a democratic and orderly way to determine for themselves their representation in this institution's most significant body.

Speaking of democracy, supporters of the draft resolution have suggested in the debate that the process that they propose is democratic. I know of no democracy in which a single election is sufficient to entitle the winner to remain in office in perpetuity. Indeed, had that option been available in Canada, I would not be here today.

The situation is scarcely improved by including a provision that foresees an illusionary and meaningless review in the very distant future. Additionally, the formula proposed in the pending draft resolution would eliminate the possibility that a Member State could truly represent the interests of its region on the Council. The addition of permanent members would also have significant and adverse indirect consequences through what is known as the cascade effect.

Since permanent members of the Council expect, as a right, to enjoy dedicated seats on a wide variety of subsidiary and related bodies, adding new permanent members would reduce opportunities for the rest of the Member States to serve on those bodies. Perhaps most important, from the point of view of the interests of this institution, the designation of some of our Member States as additional permanent members would lock into place forevermore a rigid regime unsuited to a dynamic world. Who can say what our circumstances will require in 20 years, or in 40, or in 60 more? We have seen, and we have lived with, the limitations inherent in a freeze-frame format that favours a fixed over a fluid formula. Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Canada favours an approach to Council enlargement that would reflect the values that we all seek to promote. On Friday last, Italy circulated a draft resolution on behalf of a group of Member States, including Canada, that have united in support of a broadly based consensus. That proposal, instead of increasing the number of permanent members, would add seats that would be permanently allocated to regions, while leaving the Member States in those regions to decide, from time to time, which of their number was best suited to serve, and for how long. The Uniting for Consensus proposal is flexible in leaving it to the regions to determine the duration of each regional mandate. Its approach is democratic and accountable in providing for periodic elections and re-elections at intervals to be determined by each region. In that way, there would always be an opportunity to adjust to changing circumstances and to evolving needs.

It would also spare us the damaging and divisive decision, which the pending draft resolution would force on us now, of choosing among candidates — each one worthy in its own right — that seek special status in a permanent seat that they will hold into the future, no matter what the future may hold.

Canada will therefore vote against the pending draft resolution, for all the reasons we have given. In the interests of this institution and for the sake of its capacity to confront the future with flexibility and fairness, we urge other Member States to do the same.

**Ms. Banks** (New Zealand): New Zealand has said many times in the General Assembly Hall that the current structure of the Security Council is unrepresentative and anachronistic.

In considering the nature of the expansion of the Security Council, our overriding concern is to ensure that the Security Council is more effective and representative for the twenty-first century. Any satisfactory expansion of the Council would need to include Japan.

With respect to today's debate, we acknowledge the efforts of the sponsors of the draft resolution to take the debate forward, both in terms of the composition of the Security Council and of its working methods.

In discussing the draft resolution before us, New Zealand would like to highlight two core principles. First, we have since 1945 opposed any extension of the veto right. The current draft is not yet unequivocally clear on this point. We do not see any scope for ambiguity in a draft resolution of this nature.

Secondly, we believe firmly in the principle of accountability. With respect to the addition of new permanent members, our strong preference would be for a mechanism which provides for permanent membership to be "reviewable". Such a review should be periodic, as Sweden has suggested, and not a once-only process.

Successful Security Council reform is deeply important to New Zealand. We do not want to see this process fail. We remain open to looking at all options and hope that a satisfactory outcome which reflects our core principles is possible.

The draft resolution as currently worded does not reflect those core principles.

**Ms. Rivera** (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks for the intensive rethinking process in which we are involved. The report of the High-level Panel, the report of the Secretary-General and, lastly, the draft final document that you, Mr. President, submitted to us following earlier consultations have given a significant boost to the process of negotiations which we began so many years ago.

My country, as a founding Member of the United Nations, fully supports the ultimate objective of the reform — that is, strengthening the multilateral system on the basis of the principles of international law and in particular those pertaining to the legal equality of States. That is why we believe that the reform of the organ now under consideration, with the historic impact that such reform will undoubtedly have, can be carried out only if we can rely on the greatest possible political support from all States Members of the Organization.

For that reason, we deem it extremely important to take the time necessary carefully to analyse all the options and the possible consequences of Council reform and not to rush into a taking a decision that would bring about significant divisiveness among Member States.

Uruguay cannot support any reform of the Security Council that would envisage increasing the number of Member States having the right of veto. As we have stated repeatedly, we firmly oppose the right of veto, which undermines one of the basic pillars of public international law: the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

We believe that the right of veto may perhaps have been necessary in historical circumstances very different from the current ones and that it definitely does not promote democracy in the Organization — one of the cherished goals towards which we have been working tirelessly together with other Members.

The first delegations of this country to the Organization perhaps expressed it more eloquently. The representative of Uruguay, Mr. Charlone, stated before the General Assembly in October 1952 that:

> "Today ... there may be a hope that in the near future the veto will become a thing of the past, with the spinning-wheel and the bronze hatchet, and will be no more to the peoples than the sign and symbol of a vanished world based on inequality among States, the privileges of power and the denial of the rule of law and morality." (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventh Session, Plenary Meetings, 384th meeting, para. 87*)

We share the concern expressed by many of the representatives who spoke earlier as to the concentration of efforts on the question of Council reform. While it is an important aspect of the reform of the Organization, this is not the end of the story. We need to continue to work to address other fundamental issues, such as the promotion of development; the revitalization and strengthening of the General Assembly; reform of the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights; and the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission.

**Mr. Verbeke** (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): For the past 10 years, Belgium has been actively involved in discussions on Security Council reform. Our thinking on this matter has been coordinated within a group of 10 countries; our objective was realistic, pragmatic, balanced reform that will serve to reconcile the Council's efficiency and its representativeness. For us, neither direct national interests nor ambitions of our own were involved; our motivation was born of our conviction that preserving the Council's legitimacy and authority is in the interest of the Organization and, thus, in the interest of us all. We were convinced also that to do that it was indispensable that the composition of the Security Council be adapted to the realities of today's world. It was thus that we formulated a number of ideas and proposals in the hope that we could make a positive contribution to the debate.

Those ideas are now reflected in draft resolution A/59/L.64, spearheaded by Brazil, Germany, India and Japan. In that connection, let me recall its four key provisions: expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories; an expansion balanced among geographical groups and between North and South; a review clause, which would enable the Council to remain in step with world developments; and a stress on working methods, with a view to guaranteeing greater transparency and openness in the work of the Council. We decided to join in sponsoring the draft resolution, because we agree with the proposal put forward by the group of four.

The first element — expansion in the two categories of membership — is clearly the one most characteristic of the proposal. Here, one may wonder why a country such as Belgium would support the creation of new permanent seats. Quite simply, we believe that the presence of permanent members makes the Council effective in managing issues affecting international peace and security. Effectiveness is involved here, but also authority. By bringing together around one table the major actors on the international diplomatic stage — those which make the greatest diplomatic, military and financial contribution to the Organization — the Council can speak with a voice that no one can ignore. Moreover, permanent status obliges members to assume their burdens fully and with a sense of responsibility: a permanent seat obliges a country to take a loftier view and to give structural development priority over ephemeral matters. Would the Security Council possess the same authority with only non-permanent members? Would its resolutions have the same force? We must acknowledge that the world has changed and that there is no further reason to limit this status to the five post-War permanent members. Council reform will make sense only if its purpose is to better reflect today's geopolitical realities.

Obviously, that does not mean that it is not equally important for other States to have an opportunity to become members of the Security Council. Non-permanent members too must be able to contribute actively to the work of the Council. The non-permanent nature of their mandates and the constant renewal of the Council enables the Council to draw on innovative approaches, perspectives and viewpoints that can enrich the debate and prevent it from taking place in a closed "club". Here again, we should take account of the changes that have taken place and ensure better representation for developing countries.

Let me also note that this proposal would enable countries of the South to become permanent members. Specifically, in line with the model-A proposal of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, it would provide the African continent with two permanent seats. In our view, that important action is legitimate in terms of representativeness. I would also recall that in recent years the focus of the Security Council has been largely on Africa. We consider that the presence on the Council of African regional Powers ready to shoulder their responsibility to prevent and mediate crises, aided by their knowledge of the region and of the situation in Africa, would be a clear added value for the Council.

Today, not to take a decision — not to take action — is not an option. We all know that the failure to take a decision would be to perpetuate the present

situation or to confirm the status quo in a world that is constantly developing. Failure to adapt amounts to regression. I do not think that is the message we want to send with the September summit in view.

**Ms. Løj** (Denmark): Let me start, Mr. President, by thanking you for organizing this debate.

Denmark is a sponsor of the draft resolution contained in document A/59/L.64. Denmark believes in a strong United Nations, a United Nations where decisions correspond to the opinions and desires of the membership. Denmark believes that the composition of the Security Council must reflect the world as it appears today. Denmark believes that the challenges the world is facing in the twenty-first century can be met only through enhanced legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness for the work of the Security Council. And finally, Denmark believes the time is now right for a decision on reform of the Council. That is why we decided to join in sponsoring the draft resolution before us.

The present composition of the Security Council is a reflection of a world that no longer exists. We need a Security Council that will enable the international community to effectively meet the challenges the world is facing in the twenty-first century. The Security Council must continue to play a decisive role in the promotion of peace, security, human rights and democracy. But for it to do so more effectively, broader representation is needed. A broad majority of the membership has in recent months demonstrated clear support for reform and expansion of the Security Council.

Denmark shares that view and has expressed support for expansion: expansion achieved by increasing the number of permanent members and non-permanent seats and by including developing and developed countries as permanent members.

The draft resolution before us not only reflects that view but goes further. It meets our concerns by outlining a future Security Council with more balanced regional representation. In that way, voices representing the whole world will be made much stronger, thereby enhancing the legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness of Security Council decisions. Here, I mean effectiveness in the sense that the collective pressure to adhere to Security Council decisions will increase. Broader representation will also enhance the Council's responsiveness to the views and needs of all Member States. In that respect, we call on African members of the General Assembly to support this proposal, since it greatly enhances African influence in the Security Council.

A Security Council with those qualifications is exactly what Denmark has worked for over the years. We strongly support this multilateral approach as a way of dealing with the world of tomorrow.

Adoption and implementation of draft resolution A/59/L.64 will mark not the conclusion of the Security Council reform process, but the beginning. The review clause is an excellent mechanism to maintain continued dialogue within the General Assembly on the Security Council reform issue.

If we, the General Assembly, can take a decision on this important issue only when we all agree, we will never move forward. It is time for compromise; it is time for decision. The present draft resolution gives us a unique opportunity to act. As we all know too well, this issue has already been on our agenda for more than 12 years. An early decision will be a great leap forward in our common effort to make progress on the comprehensive United Nations reform agenda. By adopting the draft resolution we will send a clear message: a clear message to the world saying that we want a stronger United Nations capable of addressing the new threats and challenges the world is facing. Moreover, an early decision on reform of the Security Council will stimulate momentum and optimism in our preparations for the 2005 summit.

There is no alternative to this draft resolution. Rejection would mean no to change, no to reform and yes to the status quo. That is not Denmark's approach to the United Nations.

**Mr. Muñoz** (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): On several occasions Chile has stated that at this historic juncture it is in favour of a comprehensive reform of the United Nations that would reaffirm the principles and values of the Charter and thereby enhance the credibility and legitimacy of the Organization, thus bringing it into step with today's world. We take that position because we understand that development, international security, democracy and human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Ultimately, the challenge before us is to strengthen multilateralism by enhancing its effectiveness in order to make it relevant.

It is against that background that we must view the reforms envisaged for the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights and the Secretariat. Thus, reform of the Security Council is an important element of the broader process of United Nations reform, but it should not monopolize it.

Our country would like to see a renewal of the Security Council that would make it more representative, transparent and effective. An increase in its membership would help to achieve that objective, but it must go hand in hand with improving the working methods of the Council and reviewing the rights and obligations of its members.

Chile is of the view that draft resolution A/59/L.64 contains positive elements aimed at adapting the Security Council to the new challenges and threats being faced by the international community.

Chile supports the addition of new permanent members, but without the right of veto. That is consistent with the fundamental value that we attach to the principle of the equality of States before the law and to the democratization of international entities, which is one of the objectives of Chile's foreign policy. I should like to recall that at the San Francisco Conference, in 1945, the provisions of the Charter that enshrine the right of veto of the permanent members were adopted by 30 votes in favour to 14 against. Chile — a founding Member of the Organization — voted against. At that time, Chile also supported and voted in favour of an Australian amendment excluding Chapter VI of the Charter from the reach of the veto. Australia's amendment was not adopted, but it received significant support from such countries as Brazil, Cuba, Iran, Mexico, the Netherlands and, of course, Australia and Chile.

Similarly, throughout the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council, my country has not only maintained that position but has actually proposed the elimination of the veto with effect from 2015. And although the total elimination of the right of veto may seem somewhat unrealistic and remote, we do not reject serious consideration of intermediate formulas, such as restricting its exercise to matters falling under Chapter VII.

We recognize the value of those provisions of the draft resolution before us that are aimed at improving the working methods of the Security Council by promoting greater transparency and efficiency.

At the bilateral level, Chile has supported the aspiration of Brazil, Germany, India and Japan to occupy permanent seats on the Security Council. Their membership would improve the representativeness of the Council. Our support is without prejudice to our historical position on the veto. As a matter of principle, and in keeping with its historical position of rejecting the veto, Chile makes a specific reservation with regard to the granting of the right of veto to the new permanent members, whether immediately or subject to a suspension or moratorium.

Further, we wish to place on record that, with regard to the increase in the membership of the Security Council, the status of Latin America and the Caribbean has been diminished when compared to that of other regions — especially taking account of the criteria related to quantitative and qualitative contributions set out by the Secretary-General in his proposal on this issue.

Chile will continue to support the building of the consensus required for what we hope will be comprehensive and successful reform of the Organization. Chile's preference is for an effort leading to compromise and agreement — which has always been its policy when confronted with divergent views. We have been working to that end in the Assembly as well as in the group of friends of reform.

You may be assured, Mr. President, of our cooperation throughout the remainder of the process. Let us not forget that, despite all the theatrics, this is but one scene in a drama that continues to unfold.

**Mr. Kuchinsky** (Ukraine): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this round of plenary meetings dedicated to one of the most pressing and crucial issues for the Organization: reform of the Security Council. I share the view, expressed by many delegations, that this truly historic debate is the culmination of a decade-long discussion on this issue in the General Assembly. If, as philosophers claim, thoughts and ideas do indeed materialize and time and energy do indeed translate into concrete forms and deeds, then I am sure we are destined to succeed this time.

Ukraine considers reform of the Security Council to be an issue of exceptional international significance. Making that body more representative and balanced and its work more effective and transparent — especially with regard to decision-making — is vital in adapting the United Nations to the global realities and challenges of the twenty-first century.

As a sponsor of draft resolution A/59/L.64, Ukraine fully endorses the introductory statement made by the representative of Brazil. Ukraine's support of the proposal stems logically from our overall approach to the issue of Security Council reform, which is based on the following principles.

First, Security Council reform should be implemented in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

Secondly, expansion of the Security Council should be carried out in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent. We support increased representation in that body for developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. Preserving the status quo in both categories of membership would, in our view, only complicate existing problems.

Thirdly, since the composition of the Group of Eastern European States has doubled over the past decade, that Group should have an additional non-permanent seat.

Fourthly, Security Council reform should result in the improvement of the Council's working methods. In particular, those countries that contribute most to the Organization militarily, diplomatically and financially should be involved in the Council's decision-making process.

I believe that the model submitted by the group of four, which contains all of those elements and meets my country's concerns, fully corresponds to Ukraine's approach to this crucial issue. Our support of that formula is in no way intended to challenge the interests of any particular country or group of countries. We fully agree that there is a need for the broadest possible agreement among Member States on this issue. Still, I believe that we should heed the Secretary-General's appeal "to take a decision on this important issue before the summit in September 2005" (*A/59/2005, para. 170*).

Ukraine fully concurs with the view held by many Member States — including the other sponsors of the draft resolution — that Security Council expansion is an integral part of comprehensive United Nations reform aimed at enabling the Organization to react effectively to the whole spectrum of challenges and opportunities in today's world, in the security, development and human rights fields alike.

Modernization of the Security Council is one of the essential elements of the broader United Nations agenda, which encompasses such crucial aspects as revitalizing the General Assembly, strengthening United Nations human rights mechanisms, reforming the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat, reinvigorating United Nations activity in support of democracy, et cetera. Through many manifestations of Ukraine's commitment to development, security and human rights for all — such as my country's chairmanship of the Third Committee and our direct participation as one of the President's facilitators in the process of preparing for the September summit — we will continue to spare no effort in helping to make progress in each of those challenging areas.

Today, we have an excellent opportunity to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations by accomplishing the long-overdue reform of one of its main bodies, the Security Council. We cannot and should not miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I am confident that, under your able leadership, Mr. President, we will rise to this challenge and move ahead towards the successful outcome of the September summit.

**Mr. Denisov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation is prepared to support any reasonable option for Security Council expansion if it is based on the broadest possible agreement within the United Nations. We believe that such an agreement would entail support for a decision more substantial than simply the legally required two-thirds vote. Voting in the General Assembly should not cause a split among Member States and thereby weaken, rather than strengthen, the United Nations and its Security Council. That, we are convinced, would be in no one's interests.

In that connection, those who advocate the swift adoption of concrete decisions on so important an issue as Security Council reform have a serious responsibility. In order to avoid harmful consequences

for the future of the Organization, they should thoroughly calculate all the positive and negative aspects of their move and provide a sober estimate of the real level of support they enjoy.

We believe that Security Council reform should be guided by the following principles.

First, the task is to increase the Council's effectiveness and to provide for more balanced Council membership by including major and influential developing countries. At the same time, making the Security Council more representative must not undermine its effectiveness. That is why we advocate preserving the Council's compact size and insist that the membership of an expanded Security Council not exceed a reasonable size — say, 20-plus members.

Moreover, in the event of a decision to expand the Security Council in both categories, we believe that the right of the veto should not be granted a priori before the list of new permanent Security Council members is determined. We reaffirm the Russian Federation's unwavering position that any dilution of the status of the five current permanent members — first and foremost, of the right of the veto — is categorically unacceptable. On the basis of that overarching position, and guided by its responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council, Russia will continue to advocate reaching the necessary agreement.

**Mr. van den Berg** (Netherlands): The Netherlands fully recognizes the need to reform the Security Council. We believe that the balanced expansion of its membership would increase its credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness. The Netherlands also agrees that we should arrive at concrete decisions before September. After the summit, it will be impossible to build the kind of momentum that we have now.

I should like to make five substantive points.

First, with regard to the issue of criteria, the Netherlands believes that objective criteria are of key importance for the composition of the Council, with regard to both aspiring permanent members and aspiring elected members. Such criteria should reflect not only contributions to international peace and security, but also the willingness to meet internationally agreed development goals, including levels of development assistance.

My second point concerns the size of the Council. There must be a fine balance between increasing the representativeness of the Council and maintaining its efficiency and effectiveness. The Netherlands firmly believes that with a Council of 25 members — as proposed by both the group of four and Uniting for Consensus — that balance would be stretched to the limit.

My third point relates to the use of the veto. In line with the need for effective decision-making, it is our preference to limit the use of the veto in general, and we certainly oppose extension of the veto to new permanent members. Unfortunately, the language on the veto contained in the resolution of the group of four is still ambivalent. In our view, any reform proposal should entail an explicit amendment to the Charter preventing the granting of the veto beyond the current permanent members.

My fourth point concerns the review. The Netherlands agrees with the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change that "no change to the composition of the Security Council should itself be regarded as permanent or unchallengeable in the future" (A/59/565, para. 255). In our view, it would be in the spirit of that argument to include a binding periodic-review clause that would ensure that new permanent members could be held accountable.

My last point has to do with the Council's working methods. Improvement of the working methods must be an integral part of the reform agenda. The involvement of United Nations Member States that are not members of the Security Council should increase, notably in the work of its subsidiary bodies. Council interaction with other United Nations bodies should become more frequent and substantive, and we favour more transparent decision-making by the Council.

Finally, the Netherlands sympathizes with the ambitions of the countries of the group of four, and we believe that the four aspiring countries are capable of taking on the responsibilities involved in shouldering the extra burden of promoting global security. The Netherlands also sympathizes with Africa's desire to obtain a permanent presence in a reformed Council, and we encourage Africa to decide soon on its candidates for permanent seats.

We look forward to a further constructive exchange of views on the outstanding issues, such as

the review and the veto, with the goal of reaching concrete decisions prior to the September summit.

**Ms. Tahir-Kheli** (United States of America): Our discussions on United Nations reform reflect unity on one point: we all believe in the Organization. That is why United Nations reform is so important. We want to change this institution so that it can become stronger and more effective, to enable it to fulfil the vision of its founders when they signed the Charter 60 years ago. We need a strong, effective United Nations if we are to confront successfully the many challenges we all face in the twenty-first century, including terrorism, mass poverty, human rights violations, epidemic disease, environmental degradation and so many other issues.

The United States is committed to a strong and effective United Nations. Our presence and our actions over many years confirm that fact. The United States, as President Bush has said, recognizes that no nation can achieve its foreign policy objectives alone. Global challenges, he affirmed, must be answered by active, effective, multilateral institutions.

The High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the Secretary-General have done a great service in identifying the broad areas in which we must enact reforms.

The United States appreciates your leadership, Mr. President, in helping move the United Nations towards agreement on key areas of reform. We will continue to work with you and with other Member States at this historic time. The United States shares the conviction that no single area of reform should be addressed to the exclusion of others. The United States has worked extensively with a large number of countries to ensure that United Nations reform is comprehensive and successful.

I come before the Assembly to strongly urge all those present — including the four good friends of the United States who submitted the framework resolution — to consider the potential impact on the Organization and on its vital work of pressing forward with a vote at this time.

I want to reiterate that the United States supports expansion of the Security Council. We have on several occasions expressed our strong support for Japan's candidacy for permanent membership. We anticipate that other countries will qualify for permanent or semi-permanent membership, and we have proposed criteria to that end. As Secretary Rice has noted, we recognize that 2005 is not 1945.

But Security Council reform alone will not address the most pressing problems of the Organization, nor will proposals to alter the Council garner the support needed to amend the Charter absent broader reform. Regardless of timing, we will oppose any proposal that would make the Council less effective than it is today. And we will oppose calling for votes on proposals that do not command the breadth of support necessary to be put into practice. Let me be as clear as possible: the United States does not think any proposal to expand the Security Council — including one based on our own ideas — should be voted upon at this stage.

It is important that all understand that while we disagree with this resolution, the nations that have put it forward are our friends. We reiterate our willingness to work with them and with other countries in the effort to achieve Security Council enlargement via a plan that is supported by the vast majority of United Nations Members and which results in a stronger, more effective Security Council, in the context of overall reform of the United Nations. Unfortunately, however, the timing and substance of the proposed resolution does not accomplish those ends.

Let me share with the Assembly some of the reasons that have led my Government to the position that it cannot support the draft resolution.

First, moving to a vote on this or any other draft resolution involving Security Council reform is bound to be divisive at this stage. The Charter of the United Nations is designed in such a way that reform of the Security Council requires broad consensus, and that is as it should be. We do not yet know the actual number of countries that might vote in favour of the draft resolution, but we do know that world opinion is still greatly divided on this issue.

While there is, in our view, broad consensus regarding the need for Security Council expansion, major differences exist regarding what kind of expansion should occur. In addition to the proposal before us, the African Union has initiated action to introduce its own draft resolution. Although the African Union draft resolution may contain a number of points in common with the draft resolution under consideration, there are differences, many of them significant. We understand the aspirations of African

nations, the vast majority of which did not enjoy independence when the United Nations was created in 1946, to serve on the Security Council. We also know that a group of countries that have joined together as Uniting for Consensus have put forward a draft resolution that proposes a very different formula for Security Council enlargement. In short, while we see valuable elements in each of those efforts, it is clear that, as yet, there is no broad-based agreement.

Secondly, Security Council expansion requires amendment of the Charter. Under Article 108 of the Charter, expansion of the Security Council requires lengthy constitutional processes in many nations, including my own. In our system, for example, the support of two thirds of the United States Senate is needed to pass an amendment to a treaty. We need to prepare the way carefully to ensure that whatever we vote for in this body will gain the requisite support of Member States required by the Charter during the ratification process. A vote to lock in a particular mode of Security Council expansion at this stage would interfere with our ability to shape a proposal later that would stand a reasonable chance of securing the requisite ratifications from Member State legislatures.

In that regard, I would note that this is not a partisan issue in my country or in many others. Whether Democrats or Republicans, United States Senators — like officials of our executive branch — will be looking to see whether Security Council enlargement is part of a broader package of needed reforms and whether it makes the Council more or less effective in discharging its important duties.

Thirdly, the search for a broad consensus should be based on agreement on criteria. Security Council expansion is necessary and will have far reaching consequences. We all recognize that the world has changed profoundly in the 60 years since the Charter was signed and this Organization was created. The founders struggled with some of the same issues we face today in applying the principles that they enshrined in the Charter. Their example is instructive today. Instead of choosing between a body that was representative but too large and unwieldy to deal with emerging security situations, or one that was efficient at the expense of representativeness, they created a system with multiple bodies with different roles. To deal with security, they formed a body of countries with the demonstrated capability to contribute to international peace and security. To ensure worldwide representation, they created the General Assembly.

The only responsible way to approach Security Council expansion is to ensure, as did the founders, that those nations accorded permanent seats meet appropriate criteria for the tremendous duties and responsibilities that they will assume. The founders did not arbitrarily pick a number for permanent membership and then try to force-fit countries into those slots. Instead, they asked which States had the demonstrated capacity to contribute substantially to international peace and security.

I have mentioned before the criteria that, in our view, define the qualifications for permanent membership: size of economy and population, military capacity, contributions to peacekeeping operations, commitment to democracy and human rights, financial contributions to the United Nations, and non-proliferation and counter-terrorism records. Geographic also needs to be taken into consideration. We are prepared to consider other proposals for appropriate criteria, but we are committed to following the basic principles that have served us all so well.

Fourthly, efficiency is essential. The Security Council has been an effective body, and it is more relevant today than ever. One of the first principles of reform should be to do no harm. Once we have reached consensus on new permanent members, we should consider some expansion of the non-permanent membership that maintains representativeness, but without making the Council so large that it becomes ineffective.

In closing, I ask all countries to again very carefully consider the draft resolution before us and to ask this critical question: does the draft resolution serve to strengthen the United Nations? We believe that it does not. We will work with other Members to achieve the enlargement of the Security Council, but only in the right way and at the right time. We urge the Assembly, therefore, to oppose this draft resolution and, should it come to a vote, to vote against it.

**Mr. Choi Young-jin** (Republic of Korea): The Republic of Korea supports reform of the Security Council that adequately reflects the changed international environment since the adoption of the Charter 60 years ago. A reformed Security Council should be more representative, democratic, transparent, accountable and effective than today's.

Expanding the number of permanent seats in the Security Council would run counter to the goals of Security Council reform and to the fundamental principles of the United Nations. In this regard, it is with regret that we note the submission by the group of four of a draft resolution (A/59/L.64) that provides for six new permanent members in addition to the existing five.

I would like to explain in detail some of the most important reasons why the addition of six new permanent members under the terms of the group of four draft resolution would be to the detriment of the international community.

First and foremost, the concept of permanent membership is contrary to the fundamental reality that the world is in constant flux. History has taught us that nothing made by human hands is ever truly permanent. Given the vicissitudes of the modern world, it would be great folly to accord special permanent status to a handful of States, because whatever decision is made now will inevitably be out of synch with changing realities in decades to come. We should not repeat the mistakes that were made six decades ago.

Secondly, the addition of new permanent members would be inequitable and unfair. The predominance of 11 permanent members in the Security Council would alienate the other 180 Member States, depriving them of the opportunity and political will to make substantial contributions to international peace and security. Most Member States will have no choice but to sit on the sidelines while an oligarchy of 11 wields a monopoly of power over international peace and security.

Thirdly, an increase in the number of permanent members would heavily impair the accountability of the Security Council. Once selected, the six new permanent members would hold on to their privileged status in perpetuity, regardless of how well they carried out their responsibilities on behalf of the general membership. Without periodic elections, the international community would have no means to seek accountability for what those 11 permanent members did in the Council. We should not forget that absolute power is apt to corrupt.

Fourthly, the creation of six new permanent seats would also seriously undercut the effectiveness of the Security Council. It would, of course, be quite difficult for the Council to address any significant issues that bore directly on one or more of its 11 permanent members. Even in cases that did not affect those 11 permanent members directly, the long process of bargaining and horse-trading among the expanded permanent membership would impede the effectiveness and efficient functioning of the Council.

Fifthly, the addition of new permanent members would create a cascade effect within the United Nations system, adversely affecting the fair and equitable distribution of membership in other bodies. Permanent members of the Security Council have enjoyed the right to be present permanently at the General Committee of the General Assembly and have had the de facto privilege of maintaining a judge permanently at the International Court of Justice and of occupying key positions throughout the United Nations system. The more than doubling of the number of permanent members would strip other Member States of opportunities to be represented in important United Nations bodies.

Last but not least, we must consider the matter of regional representation, taking as a guide the records of existing permanent members. To put it plainly, no permanent member has represented the interests of the region to which it belongs. If regions are to be represented adequately, each regional group should be given a fair share that enables States in the region to gain a presence in the Security Council in a fair and equitable manner, with accountability ensured through election or rotation.

My delegation is deeply concerned at the possibility that the complex four-stage process envisaged by the group of four will lead us nowhere. We are quite sceptical about the chances of the first stage coming to pass, but, if it does, it will be followed by the much more complicated and difficult second and third stages, namely the selection of the six new permanent members and the amendment of the related provisions of the Charter. The pursuit of this "mission impossible" would inevitably plunge Member States into a morass of bitter debate for an unpredictable period of time, taking other critical reforms hostage, including those that affect development, human rights, management of the Secretariat and collective international security. Nor, given the known positions of some of the permanent five, is there any guarantee that agreement in the General Assembly would be followed by successful ratification of the amendments to the Charter — the fourth and final stage on this long

journey. The stark reality is that the group of four's multistage approach risks derailing the whole United Nations process in general and United Nations reform in particular.

Let me now turn to a real, workable alternative. The Uniting for Consensus proposal that was circulated last Friday does not contain any increase in the number of permanent seats, and at the same time demonstrates that equitable, fair and democratic reform is possible. States that seek frequent or even continuous representation would have to act responsibly in order to sustain the support of the general membership at periodic elections. Moreover, the Uniting for Consensus proposal is a simpler yet complete package for Security Council reform that can be achieved without any complicated multistage processes.

The Republic of Korea places a high value on the successful reform of the Security Council. I remain hopeful that, in our collective wisdom, we can avoid a divisive and costly process and achieve our goals for reform through the building of a genuine consensus on this vital matter.

**Mr. Pleuger** (Germany): Mr. President, I would first of all like to thank you for giving us this opportunity to discuss the proposal of the group of four on Security Council reform and for providing the framework to advance this key aspect of overall United Nations reform. Numerous sponsors and supporters of our draft resolution have already explained why this draft best serves the interests of all Members, of all regions and of the United Nations as a whole. Our sponsors represent a broad spectrum of countries: big and small, developing and industrialized, North and South, permanent members of the Security Council, and countries that look back on long years of stability as well as some that have gone through major transformations in the recent past.

This shows that the draft resolution is not, as some would have it, in the interest of just a few. No, this kind of support is a clear sign of balance. The group of four proposal is not directed against anybody but offers something to everybody. No other draft or reform proposal comes close to the kind of large, broad-based and diverse support that our draft resolution enjoys. This is not surprising, because the other initiatives are strongly motivated by national, regional and subregional issues, or by efforts to maintain the status quo. The proposal by Uniting for Consensus, for instance, cannot prove that it has substantial support in the membership. It is even unclear whether one of the core members of Uniting for Consensus — Algeria — is still behind that proposal, which is, as far as we understand it, not in line with the African Union's position.

These narrower interests, however understandable they may be, should not and will not take precedence over the common goal of improving the major institution mandated with the maintenance of global peace and security.

I should now like to comment on some of the counter-arguments against our draft resolution in the past weeks and months.

The first is the demand for comprehensive reform and the implied criticism that the group of four proposal somehow stands in the way of that goal. That is not the case; on the contrary. We fully agree with the Secretary- General's view that United Nations reform must be comprehensive and should not follow a selective approach. But that, of course, means tackling all important aspects of reform in parallel and not shying away from issues that are more controversial — such as Security Council reform.

The Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly, with the report "In larger freedom" and with the draft outcome document, provided the road map for reform in a great many important fields. The group of four, with its framework draft resolution, provided a way forward for one of the key aspects of reform that cannot be taken up in this first track.

We believe that the group of four proposal is an indispensable complementary element of the comprehensive reform of the United Nations which we all want to achieve. It is also the only proposal that is capable of gaining majority support, as it corresponds to the proposals made in the High-level Panel report and in the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom". There is no doubt: if this draft resolution is adopted, it will give a strong political impetus to the achievement of substantial results at the September summit on other important issues such as development, human rights, security and institutional reform.

The second point that is often raised is the question of effectiveness, which has also been mentioned today. Some critics of the group of four draft resolution have held that implementation of the

resolution would undermine the effectiveness of the Council by expanding it to a total of 25 members. That criticism, of course, stems from the fallacy of seeing effectiveness only as a function of size. It disregards the fact that effectiveness is determined to an even greater extent by the legitimacy of a body's decision-making, by its structure and by its working methods. For example, some of those who oppose expanding the Council to 25 members did not oppose the expansion of NATO and would certainly disagree with the notion that the NATO Council has become less effective since it was expanded to 26 members.

The third concern I would like to address is that reform based on the group of four proposal will not be ratified by all of the five permanent members. Our proposal would strengthen the problem-solving capacity of the Security Council. That would be in the interests of everyone, including the permanent five. Once our proposal is adopted by more than two thirds of the whole United Nations membership, the opponents of this draft resolution will be faced with the question: do one or two permanent members really want to block the development and the change for the better of the whole Organization? Do they want to be seen in worldwide public opinion as those who deny to the developing countries representation in the Council on an equal footing — as permanent members?

On a previous occasion, in 1963, some of the five permanent members voted against expansion of the Council. In the end, they showed the wisdom not to be spoilers of reform and ratified the expansion despite their initial opposition. We trust that the same wisdom and respect for the will of the majority — and a democratic decision taken by all United Nations Members — will prevail once again.

Fourthly, we do not see the validity of saying that a vote would be divisive. We feel that that is a strange understanding of democracy. The Charter clearly provides for voting as a regular and legitimate means of decision-making in the General Assembly. All of the world's democratic parliaments decide by voting. The principle of one member, one vote is the most palpable sign of the sovereign equality of all Members of the United Nations, regardless of size or political weight. It seems very far-fetched to tell them that to exercise that most basic right would be divisive. In the United Nations, as in all democratic parliaments, decisions are taken on a daily basis by voting, and the minority agrees to accept the result. There is no other way in which a democracy can function.

Let me stress once more that the group of four proposal for Security Council reform contains, as a vital element, a review clause. We do not want to advocate reform that is immutable and inflexible; we want it to be put to the test again after 15 years. Our proposal gives the United Nations membership the necessary tool to review the Council's composition and working methods and to adapt them anew if political realities have changed.

I also want to reiterate that the group of four draft resolution is the only proposal that can get reform of the Council's working methods going, instead of tossing the ball once more into the court of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council Reform, as the Uniting for Consensus text does.

No other proposal provides for meaningful structural reform of the Security Council. More balance can be achieved in the composition of the Council only by expanding both permanent and non-permanent membership. Restricting expansion to non-permanent members would only maintain the status quo and increase the disparity in the Council's composition. And expanding the Council by "two or so" could never achieve the geographical balance required by the new political realities and would perpetuate the current discrimination against large parts of the developing world.

We elaborated this draft resolution in a process of the broadest consultation over several months, and it was on the market several weeks before its submission in order to give everybody time to form an opinion. We took care to accommodate regional groups such as the African Union and the Caribbean Community, and we waited for the outcomes of their summits. We are willing to continue this dialogue before we proceed to a vote.

But there will soon be a point at which all arguments have been expressed, all views heard and all possibilities for compromise exhausted. Then the only step left will be to put the draft resolution to a vote and come to a decision early enough to leave the September summit free to deal with the development agenda and the Millennium Goals. If, however, we fail to make progress on this issue before September, the success of the summit may be compromised and the repercussions of failed Security Council reform may

hamper the implementation of the Development Goals for years to come. Let us not take that risk. That is why the Secretary-General, in his report, asked us to take a decision on Security Council reform before September.

We are grateful to the President of the General Assembly for incorporating this second track of Security Council reform into his reform timetable. We will also ask the President to assume a crucial role in the second step of the group of four reform proposal by determining the most appropriate timing and sequence for the selection of candidates for new permanent seats.

The group of four and the other sponsors are convinced that Security Council reform is an indispensable part of comprehensive United Nations reform. We are convinced that reform of the Council would strengthen the United Nations and its ability to address the threats and challenges of the twenty-first century. And we are convinced that our carefully formulated draft resolution takes into account the interests of all Member States and all regional groups. It is the best achievable compromise, and there is no realistic alternative to this proposal.

After more than a decade of discussion, we now have the unique opportunity to decide on the first meaningful structural reform of the Security Council in 60 years. Let us not miss this historic opportunity. If we fail, we might not have another opportunity for many years to come. We therefore ask the General Assembly — ourselves, the Member States — to live up to our responsibility and to adopt this draft resolution.

**Mr. Kmoníček** (Czech Republic): We consider ourselves a real reform-minded country and we have no vested interest in the reform, except one — the better functioning of the whole United Nations system.

As for Security Council reform, after 10 years of dialogue, which has strangely resembled parallel monologues in which divisions of opinion were too large to be bridged, it is time to move on. Let us be pragmatic. The further analysis and deliberations proposed by some will bring us exactly what some expect — more talk and absolutely no action. The problem of Security Council reform will be as divisive as it is now and as it was before the dialogue. The division of opinion on this question is natural; the stakes are too high, and it is one of the clear signs of the health of democracy that opinion can be diverse. Voting on such an issue is the most obvious way of resolving it.

My country, being one of the sponsors of the model submitted by the group of four, has been reiterating its position for many years now. The proposal reflects our decade-long position on reform of the Security Council that would enlarge its numbers in both categories. On the issue of the veto, we believe that this proposal mirrors our support for its use to be voluntarily limited.

Whatever opinion on the proposed new shape of the Security Council one may have, one thing is obvious. The new composition of the Council goes hand in hand with the geopolitical realities of the twenty-first century. Let us be realistic. That is the way for the United Nations to stay relevant.

**Mr. Berruga** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico would like to thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate on the overall issue of Security Council reform. We are mindful of the higher significance of our deliberations insofar as they deal with the organ that is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. Given the sensitivity of that issue, our margin for error should be virtually nil.

Mexico is committed to a comprehensive reform of the United Nations and, certainly, of the Security Council. The new threats that the world is facing require a prompt, effective and united response so that our societies can live in peace and pursue their aspirations for development and well-being. This debate should result in the design and implementation of a model for the Security Council that enables us to achieve those goals in an efficient, more legitimate and equitable manner.

We begin this debate taking the model presented by the group of four as our point of reference. However, we should bear in mind that it is not the only proposal being considered by the international community. I make special note of that put forth by the African Union and that presented by the Uniting for Consensus movement, to which I will refer later.

Should the group of four's draft resolution be put to a vote, each and every Member of the United Nations should be perfectly clear about its consequences and implications for the future of our Organization.

The main argument — the one most frequently raised in support of that model — is that, after 60 years of existence, the time has come to adapt the Security Council to the realities of the twenty-first century. Indeed, we have heard that phrase repeatedly spoken today. The formula that has been found to turn that premise into reality is through the creation of six new permanent members with "the same responsibilities and obligations as the current permanent members" (*A/59/L.64, para. 5 (a)*). That is a central feature of the proposal that would not be mitigated by the suggested moratorium on the exercise of the veto power.

We are presented with three very clear messages from the proponents of that model. The first is that the world is at a juncture this year that must be fixed in time for all posterity, making it a permanent reality. In other words, current conditions should be preserved forever. The second message is that the inclusion of six countries will make a tangible and substantive difference in the way we deal with global threats to peace and security. The third message is the claim to the veto power.

The first argument is based upon a static view of the world. It is paradoxical that the same argument used to promote reform — that the world is changing and has changed since 1945 — is precisely that being used to persuade Member States that nothing should change in the future. We would then be voting for a world in stasis.

The second argument, in favour of creating six new permanent seats, has the much deeper political implication that the contribution of 180 countries is not appreciated, particularly in the decision-making process. The voices and views of the majority of the membership of the United Nations would be overshadowed by the positions of the few. Furthermore, in a Security Council such as that being proposed, 11 countries with special privileges would share the table with 14 elected members. Should the proposal be adopted, we would be further concentrating political power in a handful of countries, fostering greater inequalities and hampering cooperation and the commitment of nations to the cause of peace and security.

The third argument is that, despite the growing call for the elimination or limitation of the use of the veto, we should now extend that privilege to a larger number of countries. That would without doubt represent a structural change for the Security Council that would be very harmful to our collective security system.

Before voting for the draft resolution, we should keep in mind some practical consequences of creating new permanent seats. Permanent members have no need to pass, on a regular basis, the democratic test. That prevents the rest of the membership from renewing the mandate given to them, in line with the will of the international community and with global circumstances. Their performance might be very positive or very poor, yet they would continue to occupy that position. It would be impossible to assess their performance through elections meant either to renew or terminate their mandate. They would therefore lack any incentive to be accountable. On the contrary, they would be in a privileged position to better protect their national interest, whereas, according to the Charter, the Security Council, in the discharge of its responsibilities, acts on behalf of the entire membership.

Another issue is that the members of the Security Council belong to regions but represent themselves and their Governments. Consequently, supposing that a permanent member would represent its region would require that it first be entrusted with the express mandate to do so. That has never been the case in the history of the United Nations. On the contrary, as we consider the regional rivalries that this debate has sparked, it is extremely unlikely that the new permanent members would be able to act as regional representatives.

Should 11 countries succeed in obtaining the veto power — a prospect that the draft resolution openly envisages — it would in practice guarantee the paralysis of the Security Council. In view of those factors, the unavoidable question arises: How does this model improve our collective security system?

Give the sensitivity of this issue — the functionality of the system is at stake — it is critical for the aspirant countries to clearly state their intentions in pursuing the veto power. By contrast, if they are not to have such power or do not seek it, they should explain their rationale for claiming permanent seats.

Lastly, the sponsors of draft resolution A/59/L.64 have ignored the cascade effect that such a decision would inevitably have on countless bodies within the

United Nations family, as the Costa Rican document (A/59/856, annex) so correctly points out.

Mexico is in favour of Security Council reform that strengthens that body's representativeness, effectiveness and accountability and ensures its members are selected in a democratic manner. We firmly believe that countries that are elected and re-elected periodically by the international community would have a higher political and moral standing than they would if they occupied permanent seats. They would always have a fresh, up-to-date mandate from the membership, instead having to rely on a hazy memory of the conditions under which they attained permanent status. Re-election would mean that they enjoyed the renewed esteem and endorsement of the world majority. More important, perhaps, their performance would thus be rewarded or rejected, thereby ensuring that they conformed to the standards of behaviour that the international community wished to see reflected in the work of the Security Council.

The Uniting for Consensus countries have developed a proposal that reflects those principles — one that would prevent the United Nations from moving towards antagonism and divisiveness. According to their model, the geographical groupings would be able to decide for themselves the modalities for the distribution of the seats allotted to them. In that way, the voices of the people of the world and of each region would be better and more properly represented.

We trust that the international community will give careful consideration to the merits of that proposal, with an eye to the future. We also hope that the overall effort to reform the United Nations will continue, above and beyond the debate about the composition of the Security Council, so as to ensure that we tackle important issues such as the reform of the human rights system, the promotion of development, the fight against terrorism and the protection of the environment.

The only way in which we can be certain that reform of the Security Council will be considered and examined with the legitimacy and respect that it merits is if the entire membership believes that it is properly represented in the effort and that reform is carried out fairly and with respect for the highest standards of political ethics. Any decision on such a sensitive subject should be based on conviction and on a genuine desire to strengthen our collective security system. It should not be the result of pressure or nationalistic policies.

In order for our Organization to evolve, we cannot use the language of the twenty-first century in the economic and social spheres while at the same time using that of the nineteenth century when discussing political affairs.

Diplomacy is an asset, it one of the greatest inventions of humankind. Before its use became widespread, conflicts and disputes were invariably resolved through armed confrontation. In this house of diplomacy, the United Nations, power matters, but it does not rule. In 1945, the price of peace included the creation of the five permanent seats with which we are so familiar. In 2005, fortunately for all of us here, there is no need to pay such a price. That is the reality now, in the twenty-first century. It is our duty to ensure that that state of affairs continues.

**Mr. Vassilakis** (Greece): I believe that there is no doubt — and that we all agree — that the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, are in need of serious reform. They still reflect the realities of 1945. It seems to us that maintaining the status quo would present great difficulties. It cannot provide solutions to the problems of 2005, which are different in all their aspects.

We have been discussing this reform for the past 12 years. Further extensive debate has been going on for the past seven months within the United Nations, as well as outside the Organization in academic and political circles. We have been examining very carefully all proposals and ideas. We feel that the time is right to move forward.

Unanimous decisions are very desirable. Nevertheless, taking a decision by vote is a democratic process. No one should forget that in our national parliaments, decisions by vote are made every day on every issue, without consensus.

In our previous statement (see A/59/PV.26) we expressed our preference for model A. An expansion in the permanent and non-permanent categories will provide balance in the Council. It will increase the accountability and transparency of that body, as well as its multicultural and multidimensional character. In our view, its decisions will be taken by developed and developing nations together. Again in our view, they will have a better chance to be implemented by all.

There is no perfect solution. At this stage, however, Greece feels that draft resolution A/59/L.64 can provide the Security Council with the means to find global solutions to global problems. We hope that it will acquire the widest possible support for the benefit of the United Nations and with a view to its renewal.

**Mrs. Juul** (Norway): The Security Council of today largely reflects the international situation of 1945. That restricts the representativeness, efficiency and legitimacy of the Council. That is the basic premise of today's debate — a premise that is acknowledged almost unanimously within the membership of the Organization.

Norway has argued for a balanced enlargement of the Security Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. We have always advocated the interests of small countries in the rotation of non-permanent seats. Our main priorities have been to ensure that the Council functions with cohesion and effectiveness and that the composition of the Council better reflects the current configuration of the United Nations membership. That challenge should be properly addressed in order to support and strengthen a core mandatory function of the United Nations and thereby further promote multilateralism in today's world.

Bearing that in mind, we are pleased with the modalities for enlargement reflected in the draft resolution before us. In our view, the addition of six permanent and four non-permanent seats strikes a proper balance between the demands for enhanced effectiveness and those for enhanced legitimacy. Moreover, owing to the current under-representation of the African and Latin American and Caribbean regions, we are particularly satisfied that the proposal adequately reflects the interests of those two regions. We also agree with the proposals regarding the Council's working methods aimed at enhancing transparency and inclusiveness.

Inextricably linked to the question of the composition of the Security Council is the question of veto rights. In line with the recommendation of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, and as a means to ensure the Council's efficiency, the Norwegian view has been that we should refrain from extending the veto power to new permanent members. We have also consistently advocated limiting the use of the veto. We have noted the decline in recent years in the use of the veto by the current five permanent members. We expect that in the future we will witness the same restraint being exercised by the Council's permanent members. In that regard, we take note of the wording of paragraph 5 (b) of draft resolution A/29/L.64, and we welcome the statements made by representatives of the group of four that they have no intention of exercising the right of veto.

On the basis of a comprehensive assessment, Norway stands ready to support the draft resolution before us. We hope that its adoption will represent a first step towards making the Council more representative of the international community as a whole and will thereby enhance the legitimacy required of that important body.

**Mr. Mérorès** (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): I shou'd like at the outset to pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his tireless and constant efforts to adapt the United Nations to the realities of today's world. I should also like to pay tribute to you, Mr. President, for having convened these meetings, which provide all of us with the opportunity to have a fully transparent discussion of the various proposals before us concerning Security Council reform. I should like to assure you once again of my delegation's full support in this important exercise.

After the Second World War, the founding fathers of the Organization, in order to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which had brought untold sorrow to mankind, entrusted to the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

In 1945, the States members of the Security Council represented three fourths of the world's population. Today, its composition does not reflect the current international system in terms of either demographics or power. That has considerably reduced the Council's legitimacy. Sixty years later, the reform of that important organ of the United Nations system is a historical necessity if the Council is to reflect the international scene. We must address its weak democracy and its lack of representativeness.

Equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council are universally supported by Member States, which advocate enhancing the organ's representativeness and

improving its working methods for responding to crises that threaten world peace and security.

After the many debates on this issue, my country believes that the time has come for us to act. In that connection, draft resolution A/59/L.64, introduced yesterday by Brazil on behalf of the group of four, should enhance the legitimacy of the Council by giving it additional permanent and non-permanent members. The draft resolution has a democratic nature, and we believe it reflects the international environment. The inclusion of permanent members from various regions — particularly from Latin America and the Caribbean and from Africa — should be particularly welcomed. The draft resolution is also in keeping with the attainment of the Millennium Goals, whose strategic vision is based on the closely linked triptych of development, security and human rights, in accordance with the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005).

It is therefore up to us to take a decision on this issue and to continue our efforts to truly revitalize the General Assembly and reform the Economic and Social Council in order to ensure better coordination between the General Assembly and its bodies, as instituted by the Charter of the United Nations.

However, my country believes that the debate on Security Council expansion must not eclipse other subjects of vital importance that our leaders will have to consider in September. Particularly for developing countries and, even more so, least developed countries, such as mine, the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals is of equal, if not greater, importance.

Nonetheless, my delegation agrees with the idea of a renewed United Nations that serves the Member States constituting it. We believe that the group of four draft resolution, of which Haiti is a sponsor, could provide the necessary impetus for balanced Security Council reform that promotes international peace and security. We fully support the draft resolution and appeal to other Member States to do likewise.

**Mr. Andrianarivelo-Razafy** (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): Like previous speakers, Mr. President, I should like to welcome your initiative of organizing this meeting and to express my deep appreciation to you.

I have the honour and the privilege to take the floor on behalf of Madagascar. I wish to state my delegation's position on Security Council reform, particularly with regard to draft resolution A/59/L.64.

At the outset, we wish to reaffirm our solidarity and unity with Africa. Madagascar belongs to the great African family and intends to remain within it. However, we recommend that the consultations continue in an atmosphere of openness, tolerance and mutual understanding so that we can achieve positive results.

With regard to the candidacy of Japan, we see no basic objection to its becoming a permanent member of the Security Council. Here, we cannot fail to mention Japan's sustained commitment to promoting development in Africa — for example, through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development process.

Finally, I should like to reaffirm the official statement made on this subject by the President of Madagascar, His Excellency Mr. Marc Ravalomanana, during the general debate of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in September 2004 (see A/59/PV.4).

**Mr. Elisaia** (Samoa): I am taking the floor to convey Samoa's support for the draft resolution that is before the General Assembly. Allow me to elaborate.

For two afternoons now, we have been debating the draft resolution submitted by the group of four, and we have heard some modifications made to it. We have been briefed about the Uniting for Consensus draft resolution, and we have been informed of the African Group's decision, as well as a few variations of the same.

What the promoters of those draft resolutions and proposals have in common is their claim that their particular model will greatly enhance the chances of a least-developed-country island State such as Samoa becoming a non-permanent member of the Security Council sometime in future. While statistically that may be the case, the possibility of such noble intentions being realized will continue to remain elusive, if current regional group voting practices are anything to go by.

I have said informally in the past — and I will say so again now — that if the General Assembly decides, out of the goodness of its heart, to allocate a

seat specifically for the Pacific Islands Forum Group, then, and only then, will Samoa have a fighting chance of serving on the Security Council. But how can we aspire to such a status when we cannot take up lesser challenges within the United Nations because of our resource constraints?

The group of four draft resolution has been labelled divisive. Presumably, States have to take sides during a vote at some stage, even though we know we are not necessarily creating a precedent. The draft, moreover, has been blamed for diverting the attention of the international community, which, it is said, should have been focused closely on other priority items on the United Nations agenda, including preparations for the September summit, notwithstanding the fact that some of the decisions relating to those very vital issues will be taken — or have already been taken in recent months — in forums outside of this Hall.

Some are even cautioning and reminding us that these are sensitive issues and that we must tread with care, and that we therefore need more time to consult and should not set any artificial time frame. Yet we must remind ourselves that Security Council reform has been debated and discussed for more than a decade now. Ironically, when we discuss draft resolutions on other United Nations issues, we usually find ourselves insisting on having action-oriented and time-bound resolutions as the only way forward and the means to gauge and monitor progress.

Samoa's support for the group of four draft resolution is firmly rooted in our unequivocal support for the enlargement of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. We remain convinced that an expansion of the Council is both necessary and desirable to mirror present-day realities and to enhance its effectiveness and its legitimacy. Our support for an enlarged Security Council, to include Japan and Germany because of their valuable contributions to the international community, is a matter of record at the United Nations, and we took that stance nine years ago at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly. The group of four draft resolution therefore provides what is perhaps the only real avenue within the foreseeable future for Samoa to give effect and expression to its stated position.

**Sir Emyr Jones Parry** (United Kingdom): The British Government welcomes this debate on the important issue of Security Council reform. We have supported the expansion of membership of the Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories for some time. An enlarged and strengthened Security Council will be more representative of the membership of the United Nations and better able to meet the challenges of today's world, and, even with the proposed expansion, the ratio of Security Council to General Assembly members will be no more than it was 60 years ago.

We also want a Council which is more transparent, engages better with other United Nations bodies and consults more effectively with the wider membership. This greater openness will enable the Council better to perform its Charter responsibilities.

The British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, underlined the United Kingdom's longstanding position in his address to the Assembly last September — a position in favour of permanent membership for India, Brazil, Germany and Japan. The United Kingdom also supports permanent membership for Africa.

The United Kingdom will therefore vote in favour of this draft resolution. But it needs to be clear that the United Kingdom has never believed that the extension of the veto beyond the current five permanent members is a necessary feature of expanded permanent membership, nor would it be in the wider interests of the United Nations. The United Kingdom will therefore cast its positive vote with this in mind and will carefully scrutinize the necessary amendments to the United Nations Charter in due course. Reforming the Security Council is an important aspect of adapting the United Nations to face the challenges of the twenty-first century. But it is only one aspect.

The work which you are leading, Mr. President, in preparing substantial and ambitious outcomes for the September summit, is essential. That meeting will be a vital rendezvous for the United Nations. At issue is no less than relaunching a reformed and revitalized United Nations to meet the security, development and human rights needs of this new century.

Indeed, the United Nations should be capable of tackling the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, thus ensuring freedom from want. We should be able to adopt and implement policies to ensure freedom from fear and freedom for all the

world's citizens to live in dignity. We should be able to build on the reform agenda which the Secretary-General is leading; and we should have institutions and organs capable of delivering on those objectives.

In our view, we must redouble our efforts, in support of yours, in the coming days and weeks, to achieve those ambitious and comprehensive outcomes. The United Kingdom will continue to do its utmost to contribute to that goal.

**Mr. Beck** (Palau): Palau is a sponsor of the draft resolution that is before the General Assembly this afternoon on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

Many delegations have eloquently offered their considered views on the importance of the reform of the Security Council, which this draft resolution is designed to accomplish. I would associate my delegation with all of those who have stated that failing to act now will only perpetuate the status quo and thereby result in our neglecting to address the great changes that the world has seen since the formation of this critically important institution.

More geographical representation is simply better, not worse. More representation of developing countries, with their peculiar sensitivity to the links between development and security, is better, not worse. So we associate ourselves with all delegations that have expressed such sentiments in words or in substance.

Please indulge me by taking that universal perspective while I focus briefly on the more parochial interests of Palau. Like virtually all of the island nations whose representatives now sit in this Hall, Palau was not even envisioned as a country or as a participating member of this body when the Security Council was originally formed. Moreover, the people of that time could not even conceive of the unique and terrible environmental and developmental challenges now faced by the many Pacific island Member States. Clearly, the world has changed. I should say, however, that because of Japan's particular understanding as a result of its proximity and commitment to the remote island nations in the Pacific, those States have all benefited greatly from the generosity of a regional partner.

That understanding should become a permanent part of the collective wisdom of the Security Council. Similarly, in every region of the world, there are large countries with developmental and nation-building challenges and regional understanding to add wisdom to the debate. The expansion of the Security Council is designed to capture and use that understanding for the benefit of the world.

**Mrs. Asmady** (Indonesia): As reform of the United Nations will be accorded priority on the agenda of the General Assembly's High-level Plenary Meeting in September 2005, it is regrettable that the preparations for that historic event face the prospect of being derailed by the controversy over Security Council reform, especially the expansion of its membership.

In this regard, Indonesia would like to reiterate its commitment to and support for a comprehensive approach to United Nations reform. We agree that Security Council reform is important and long overdue. However, we wish to emphasize that there are many other facets of United Nations reform that are, by the same token, critical and that need our equal attention.

From a procedural standpoint, Indonesia believes that the à la carte approach that is currently being taken with a view to reaching a decision regarding the expansion of Security Council membership is clearly unwarranted. It is inconsistent with the consensus to engage in the comprehensive discussion on United Nations reform that Member States agreed to undertake from the beginning of the informal consultations in May. Hence, that approach would undermine the basic objective of comprehensive United Nations reform.

We would also like to express our concern that this hasty approach will sidetrack our leaders in September 2005 and distract them from discussing important and pressing issues of interest and concern to the overwhelming majority of Member States.

In the draft resolution proposed by the group of four, the allocation of additional seats to each region is based merely on geographical distribution, with each region being allocated a certain number of seats. Consequently, the formulation proposed would mean six new permanent and four new non-permanent members.

That geographical approach, in our view, runs the risk of over-representation of some regions and

underrepresentation of others. Although the draft resolution before us does not single out any country in particular, it is obvious that the developing countries have diminished opportunities to be represented proportionally. Thus there is a danger of creating an inequitable Security Council.

Moreover, there is no indication that the criteria for an expanded membership are either specific or appropriate. In this regard, since the initiation of deliberations on Security Council reform more than a decade ago, Indonesia has always maintained that it is important to establish clear and objective criteria when determining candidacies for membership.

In line with the role and authority of the Council, Indonesia would like to emphasize that criteria to determine expanded membership should include, among others, a country's contribution to peacemaking and peacekeeping, as well as a role in regional peace and stability. To that, we must add commitment to cooperation for peace and security in the world, which would encompass support for efforts for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and combating terrorism. Furthermore, a country's attributes in demographic terms and its strong commitment to democracy and human rights merit consideration.

We must also acknowledge that the concept of peace and security has evolved and must recognize important elements of cultures and civilizations. In fact, this concept is being approached and evaluated from the perspective of a potential clash of civilizations. Those immutable factors can no longer be ignored.

It is therefore clear that without an agreement that would take into account such undeniable realities, any formulation to determine new members of the Security Council that is based merely on geographical distribution would lead only to an inequitable Security Council. Thus, it would have the potential to create an unacceptable imbalance in representation, especially from the perspective of cultures and civilizations.

In this context, we would like to stress that, as is already widely known, Asia consists of 56 countries, more than 50 per cent of the world's population inhabit the region. Equally important, it is home to a variety of cultures and civilizations, including Islamic civilizations.

Unfortunately, the current trend is towards underrepresentation for Asia. For that reason, any decision on the expansion of Security Council membership will be inappropriate if the realities prevailing in Asia are not fully taken into account.

Indonesia wishes to emphasize that Security Council expansion must be based on consensus, using appropriate criteria to determine new membership. Otherwise, the process will be determined solely on the basis of geographical allocation and mathematical calculations that will jeopardize the principles of democracy and justice that the United Nations seeks to uphold.

Indonesia hopes that the issue of Security Council expansion will be undertaken in a manner that will not create divisiveness in the United Nations, as that will not be advantageous for any Member State or group of States. My delegation remains hopeful that it will be possible to reach a compromise among the various proposals that have been submitted before our leaders meet in September 2005.

**Mr. İlkin** (Turkey): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for giving us the opportunity to discuss in depth the critical issue of Security Council reform. It is indeed a matter that will have a great impact on the work of the Security Council and, for that matter, on the United Nations as a whole.

At present, one draft resolution has been tabled and one draft resolution has been circulated, and one more draft resolution will most likely be tabled tomorrow. Without going into the specifics of any of them, I should like to reiterate some of the views I have previously expressed on the important issue of Security Council expansion.

We do not find it absolutely necessary to increase the number of permanent members, because the concept of permanent membership runs counter to the principle of sovereign equality, the very foundation on which the Organization is built. Indeed, we would like to see a more representative Security Council that would better reflect the present membership of the Organization. We feel that we should adequately increase the number of non-permanent seats so as to make the Council more representative.

The criteria for membership should be reasonable and achievable so that a great majority of Member States could seek a seat on the Security Council.

Raising the bar too high would lead to selectivity, which would in reality enable only a small number of Member States to join the Council.

On the other hand, it would be far more desirable if every Member of the Organization could aim for Security Council membership if it believed that there was a role it could play. Is it not better to represent oneself rather than to be represented by someone else? Furthermore, we feel confident that every Member of the Organization would be able to represent its own region, when it comes to that. Having said that, we are prepared to accept flexible and renewable non-permanent membership, which could allow Member States to be re-elected if they and their regions so wished.

It is true that we may have focused too much on this particular dimension of the reform process, perhaps at the expense of others. Yet it is a very important aspect that has a direct bearing on the functioning of the Organization. It took us so long to get to where we are. This is an opportunity that we cannot afford to miss.

**Mr. Stagno Ugarte** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate on Security Council reform. Although the issue we are considering is important, we are convinced that no United Nations reform will be complete without a thorough revitalization of the General Assembly, our main deliberative and representative organ.

I wish to place on record our conviction that the Security Council requires comprehensive reform that would give it transparency, democracy, rotation and effectiveness and would enable it to act on behalf of all Member States in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

In that connection, we welcome this opportunity to comment on the proposals before us, particularly those of the group of four and of the Uniting for Consensus group. Although those proposals have different approaches, there are also important points of convergence that we believe should serve as a basis for seeking consensus solutions that will correspond to the best interests of all Member States. Those points of convergence deserve thorough consideration and reflection.

The implications of any reform of the Security Council are so profound both within the Organization and at the regional and global levels that they require sufficient time for consideration and analysis. As the Secretary-General stated in his report "In larger freedom", "the cause of larger freedom can only be advanced by broad, deep and sustained global cooperation among States" (*A/59/2005, para. 18*).

Most of our consultations on the Security Council have focused on the issue of its expansion. We believe that that is not sufficient, since we have before us the opportunity to be more ambitious, to go beyond adjustments and to agree on a new consensus regarding the form in which the Organization must face today's challenges.

In that connection, we believe that collective security is security of all, by all and for all. We accept the fact that, in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter, all Member States have conferred on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and we recognize that the Council acts on behalf of everyone in carrying out the functions that that responsibility imposes. However, we should focus on refining that delegation so that Council action is a manifestation of all, by all and for all.

We believe that in this collective effort to reform the Security Council, we must not miss any opportunity to limit the use of the veto, including with a view to its eventual elimination. As a first step, we believe it essential to move towards defining limitations on the use of the veto through specific amendments to Article 27, paragraph 3, such as prohibiting the use of the veto in relation to issues such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and massive human rights violations. Our conscience does not allow us to take any other course. As the Secretary-General stated in his report,

> "It cannot be right, when the international community is faced with genocide or massive human rights abuses, for the United Nations to stand by and let them unfold to the end" (*Ibid., para. 134*).

Unless we thoroughly reform the working methods of the Security Council, we will not be carrying out Council reform but a mere expansion, a mere adjustment. The democracy, transparency and accountability of the Council depend mainly on the

working methods. Therefore we need to prepare a draft resolution or an annex to the draft outcome document of the President of the General Assembly that contains clear and precise measures aimed at substantially improving them. We are confident that all parties interested in Security Council reform will contribute to such an effort.

As we stated in the annex to document A/59/856 on the "cascade effect", Costa Rica believes that it is necessary to seriously examine that issue, as any extension of the "cascade effect" could potentially affect the sense of collective ownership which necessarily underlies the United Nations. If we want United Nations action to be a manifestation of all, by all and for all, we must put an end to the "cascade effect" and avoid any initiative that is likely to increase its sphere of application. In that connection, we should adopt adequate safeguards to counteract the "cascade effect" with a view to its eventual elimination.

Turning to the proposals before us, I should like to mention some of our concerns and preoccupations, already expressed previously, in relation to the content of and procedures contained in draft resolution A/59/L.64.

When we examined the proposals seeking to expand Security Council membership in both categories, we were unable to reconcile the creation of new permanent members with the calls for greater democracy and rotation. Permanent status could become a privileged position that would not adequately respond to the universal call for greater democracy, rotation and transparency. Permanent status does not foster accountability for those remaining frozen in their positions. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Costa Rica, Mr. Roberto Tovar Faja, noted in a recent appearance before our parliament:

> "There is something contrary to the nature of Costa Rica here — and I am sure I am speaking for almost everyone. It is of the very substance of our national character that we do not find it natural to vote for an individual or a country *per secula seculorum* ... A State that does not require re-election is, for all practical purposes, a State that is not accountable and that has little to worry about".

Based on such basic principles of democracy and rotation, Costa Rica values proposals that in expanding the Security Council would create new seats subject to periodic elections and to accountability. Here, Costa Rica would entertain the possibility of creating new non-permanent seats with longer terms of office and permitting immediate re-election of outgoing Council members, in the context of reform of Article 23 of the Charter, provided that the necessary guarantees are present to ensure democracy, rotation and due accountability subject to the will of the regional groups and consistent with their criteria. Specifically, we note that a mere two-year term of office is very short in terms of the institutional memory of elected members of the Security Council.

Turning to procedures for increasing the number of permanent members, I wish to comment on two situations that are of particular concern to us and that we feel should be considered in depth before we embark on so uncertain an endeavour. The first concern relates to triggering an endless electoral process, one lacking a limit on the number of rounds of balloting in the General Assembly to select the States that would enjoy the privilege of occupying the proposed new permanent seats. Theoretically, it is possible that all seats could be filled on the first ballot, but we need to be responsible and consider all possible and probable scenarios. In that regard, let me recall that in only 27 of the 59 elections held in the Assembly to fill non-permanent seats were all seats filled in a single round. In the other 32 elections, on average, more than 13 ballots were required. In 1955, there were 36 rounds, and the process ended with an agreement between the parties that they would share the term. In 1959 there were 52 ballots and, again, the process ended with an agreement between the parties to share the term. As recently as 1979, after 155 ballots the candidates withdrew and a third candidate was endorsed for the non-permanent seat in question.

Here, it is important to stress two points. First, in elections to fill non-permanent seats, the number of ballots does not necessarily affect the legitimacy and credibility of the candidates. Elections for permanent membership would be quite different. In our view, if a candidate managed to secure the support required to occupy a permanent seat only after countless ballots — with its support growing vote by vote, round by round — the legitimacy and credibility it needed to occupy a permanent seat would be weakened. Unlike the cases I mentioned, where it was possible to achieve an outcome through the withdrawal of candidates or through an agreement to share the term of office, it will

be possible for a State to be elected to a permanent seat only if it persists and wins through general fatigue or if it withdraws – in which case, we would need to decide what to do about the vacant seat or seats.

Our second concern relates to the possibility of single candidatures from a given region. If there are to be regional candidates, each region must have the opportunity to seek the required consensus. The absence of a regional group endorsement would be inconsistent with the logic and spirit behind the principle of regional representation. Paragraph 2 of the group of four draft resolution provides a window of opportunity of only a single week for other States to submit their candidatures, and paragraph 3 (a) allows for only 12 weeks between the opening of the process and the likely date of the election. That must be corrected in order to ensure the greatest possible participation for every region and to maximize the opportunities for candidatures beyond those of individual States that have not gained endorsements.

I assure you, Mr. President, that my delegation is prepared to continue to play a constructive role in the negotiations with a view to finding a consensus solution that will be satisfactory to all Member States. If in the course of the coming negotiations none of the current proposals gains acceptance as a starting point for an agreed solution, Costa Rica will be ready to offer an alternative model that would move us away from the extremes and lead us out of the impasse on Security Council reform that we now face.

I conclude by quoting the Secretary-General:

> "In an era of global interdependence, the glue of common interest, if properly perceived, should bind all States together ...,
>
> "...
>
> "... working together on the basis of shared principles and priorities — which is, after all, the very reason the United Nations exists". (*A/59/2005, paras. 2 and 19*)

We trust that each and every one of us will have the patience that is sometimes needed in the service of that common interest.

**Mr. Salgueiro** (Portugal): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the way in which you have been conducting the work of the General Assembly this year, which is a very significant one for the United Nations. We renew our strong commitment to work towards successful and ambitious decisions on how to adapt the United Nations to the twenty-first century, including with respect to institutional matters.

I will concentrate now on the question of Security Council reform, which we are addressing here today. I can be very brief because the Portuguese position is known to the Assembly. Twelve years ago the Portuguese Government declared itself to be in favour of an enlargement of the Security Council in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent, so that it would better reflect the world of today through a rebalancing of its representativeness. In the past, on more than one occasion, we have expressed our support for the accession to permanent membership of Germany, Japan, Brazil and India. Portugal is on record as supporting an improvement of the decision-making process and the working methods of the Security Council.

Draft resolution A/59/L.64 is the first concrete proposal in decades to try to advance the attainment of the goal of Security Council reform along the lines advocated by Portugal. Our decision to support and to sponsor the draft resolution was the only option that was coherent and consistent with our previous position on this subject. We believe that, if adopted, the draft resolution will be a major step forward towards a more effective multilateral system with the United Nations at its centre.

Indeed, we see the following merits in the text we have before us. It provides a historic opportunity for the accession of developing countries to permanent membership, thereby putting an end to an imbalance that should no longer exist. It also increases the chances of countries from all regions to be elected to non-permanent seats. It allows for a significant increase in African representation, including through the allocation of two permanent seats to the African continent, which Portugal has been arguing in favour of. It foresees a democratic method for selection to the new permanent seats through elections with secret balloting. It widens the circle of permanent members, allowing for the development of a working culture that is more open and more cooperative with the wider membership of the United Nations. It establishes that the veto will not be exercised by the new permanent members. It puts forward good, concrete proposals on the Council's working methods, providing for a significant and meaningful enhancement of the

transparency, inclusiveness and legitimacy of the Security Council's work, thereby increasing the Council's effectiveness. And it includes a review clause, ensuring that the reforms to be adopted now will be subject to evaluation 15 years after their entry into force.

We thank you, Mr. President, for convening these important meetings of the General Assembly. Since 1994, this body has been discussing Security Council reform, specifically in the framework of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council. For many years, there has been wide agreement on the need to adapt the United Nations and its main bodies to an international context that has evolved significantly since the creation of the Organization at the end of the Second World War. Now we have an opportunity to consider, and take action on, a concrete proposal that will lead to an adequate reflection of today's world and to the improvement of the functioning of the United Nations. Let us seize the momentum and make Security Council reform a reality.

**Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Spanish delegation, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening these plenary meetings of the General Assembly to debate the issue of Security Council reform, enabling us to carefully consider the various proposals that have been put before us thus far.

First of all, I would like to reiterate that, as far as the delegation of Spain is concerned, the issue of reforming the Security Council should not be addressed as an isolated component of the process leading up to the summit in September 2005. As we understand it, although this is a matter of enormous importance on which it is necessary that we reach agreement with the greatest possible support from Member States, we must also avoid having this very crucial issue overshadow the other substantive issues that will have to be resolved at the summit, such as attaining the Millennium Development Goals and completing the Organization's reform agenda.

We have before us at least four proposals in various stages of completion aimed at beginning possible reform of the Security Council. First of all, we have the proposal put forth by a number of delegations that is contained in document A/59/L.64. Secondly, we have the proposal of the African Union, which was referred to yesterday at the beginning of the debate by the representative of Algeria. Thirdly, we have the proposal circulated on 8 July by the countries making up the Uniting for Consensus group. Lastly, an important delegation has made specific suggestions for Security Council reform that we believe also merit serious consideration.

The fundamental thrust of the Uniting for Consensus proposal entails increasing the number of elected Council members, including making re-election possible. That proposal is based on three pillars: equality, responsibility and unity. It stresses equality in that because small and medium-sized States, which make up the vast majority of Members of the Organization, would have greatly enhanced opportunities to have access to the Security Council and to influence it on the basis of the principle of the sovereign equality of States. It offers responsibility, because the addition of new permanent seats in the Council would not lead to proper accountability to all Member States: we believe that the only way to enhance the accountability of Council members is through the renewal by means of elections — and, as appropriate, periodic re-elections — by the General Assembly. Lastly, the proposal stresses unity, because such an important decision should not be taken in a manner that further divides the Organization; it should be taken through the establishment of broad consensus on which to build the future of the United Nations.

We think that the Uniting for Consensus proposal has certain features that might be found satisfactory by a vast majority of the Members of the Organization. First of all, it is a democratic proposal, as the 20 non-permanent members of the Council would be elected in an open and transparent fashion by the General Assembly, thereby fully respecting the principle of the sovereign equality of States. Secondly, the proposal is adaptable, as it would make it possible to take into account the emergence of new geopolitical realities through the process of potential re-election. Thirdly, it is flexible, as each regional group could play a decisive role with regard to the conditions and modalities for its members' participation, so that the Security Council could adapt to the changing realities in every region or subregion.

We have studied draft resolution A/59/L.64 very carefully, submitted by the group of four countries and sponsored by a total of 29 delegations. We know that there are countries that believe that, owing to their

important contributions to the Organization, they should be represented more frequently on the Security Council because of the current vast differences between being a permanent member of the Council and being a State obliged to vie for non-permanent membership for a mere two-year term without the possibility of immediate re-election. Nevertheless, we believe that we should avoid trying to correct this anomaly with another. There are in fact already too many differences between permanent and non-permanent Council membership to further exacerbate that imbalance.

Various speakers in this debate have already pointed out the drawbacks of the group of four proposal, as well as of the approach suggested for carrying it out. I would like to focus on just a few of those issues.

First of all, the proposal submitted by the group of four envisions drastically altering the Security Council's composition as regards the proportion of permanent to non-permanent members, making that proportion almost equal. Doing that would make it almost impossible for the nearly 80 States that have not been members of the Security Council in past decades to have access to membership, as 180 Member States would be competing for just 14 non-permanent Council seats.

Secondly, creating new permanent seats would in practice not help to improve the participation of non-members in the Council's work. There is no better way to take part in the work of the Council than to have a real chance to join it as a non-permanent member at some point. There is no better recipe to improve accountability than the election or re-election of a candidate that is periodically subjected to the sovereign will of all Member States. In that regard, we would like to note that the issue of improving the Council's working methods should be addressed in greater depth on the basis both of the discussions of the Open-ended Working Group and of other interesting contributions by various delegations, among which I would like to highlight the document circulated by Switzerland.

Thirdly, resolution 59/291 calls upon us to spare no effort to ensure that we reach the broadest possible agreement among Member States on all major issues relating to the summit to be held on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the Organization. We have on several occasions debated what "broadest possible agreement" means, given that it is foreseeable that unanimous consensus among Member States will be extremely difficult to achieve. In that regard, I would like to recall that when the Assembly adopted resolution 1991 (XVIII), on reforming the Security Council, in December 1963, the text had the support of 97 Member States, with 11 votes against and 4 abstentions. In other words, by a broad margin, the decision to increase the number of Council members from 11 to 15 had the support of about 87 per cent of the States that were then Members of the United Nations. At the same time, we should also not forget that that reform was of lesser scope than the one being proposed by the group of four, as it did not seek to create new permanent members.

Looking soberly at the current situation, we must acknowledge that none of the proposals now before us enjoys the minimum support required for Charter reform, namely, that of two thirds of Member States — much less coming anywhere near that 87 per cent of the membership of the Organization, which would lend unquestionable legitimacy to a decision of such far-reaching importance for the future of the United Nations.

As I have mentioned, this is the first time that plenary meetings of the General Assembly have been convened to consider a formally introduced draft resolution on this subject — apart from other proposals that have been circulated informally. That being the case, we do not believe it would be prudent to move hastily to a vote that can predictably lead to a very serious rift among Member States and that will have unforeseeable and real consequences for the next steps in the process of reforming the Organization as a whole.

We therefore believe that the President of the General Assembly should continue to hold consultations with the groups sponsoring the various proposals, with a view to reaching the broadest possible agreement on reform of the Security Council, thus avoiding division in the Organization. With a view to the future broad agreement to which we clearly all aspire, those consultations should be based on a set of basic guidelines for Security Council reform that could serve as a framework, incorporating the positions that, in spite of everything else, are common to the various proposals that have been put forth.

In short, this is not about unnecessarily delaying the taking of decisions. What we all want is for common sense and restraint to prevail so that we can

reach the broadest agreement possible as quickly as we can and so that, once the Security Council is reformed, it will be more efficient, transparent and democratic, to the benefit of the purposes of the Charter and of the entire membership of the Organization.

**Mr. Sen** (India): We congratulate you, Mr. President, on convening these historic plenary meetings under agenda item 53. You have led us with honour and distinction during the fifty-ninth session, and we are confident that, as we near its conclusion, we will achieve fruitful and productive outcomes under your able leadership. I would also like to convey my apologies, for I had not intended to speak in this debate. I will therefore speak extemporaneously for much of my statement, and it will not be possible to distribute copies of my text.

This is not just another plenary debate. The group of four has introduced a historic draft resolution that seeks to reform the Security Council in such a manner and through such a process as to revitalize the General Assembly through praxis and not mere promises, and through action and not mere aspiration. The General Assembly cannot be revitalized through wishing and desiring it, but only through hard thought and harder exercise of will.

The critics of the draft resolution — and there are not many — have alleged that we have introduced the proposal in haste, that we have not been inclusive in our approach and that a decision on the matter should be taken only on the basis of consensus. The debate on Security Council reform has been taking place for over 12 years now, and the issues are widely known. Those discussions have intensified over the past year. In the past six months, there have been particularly intense consultations processes. The substance of the proposal has been discussed by the group of four with every group and Member State in the United Nations, both in New York and in capitals. Not only is the draft resolution the culmination of discussions that have taken place for well over a decade, but it is the consequence of a broad-based consultation process that takes on board the concerns and views of all.

And finally, in moving ahead and calling for action, we are heeding the advice of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who has stated, not without reason, that no reform of the United Nations would be complete without reform of the Security Council and that, as a consequence, Member States should take a decision on this issue before September 2005.

Likewise, the undue emphasis on consensus only serves to confuse and obfuscate the issue. By adopting resolution 53/30, the General Assembly quite clearly determined that the requirement for a decision on this question is two thirds of the membership. To now artificially raise the bar — as some have sought to do, including very recently — is quite clearly arbitrary and self-serving.

The critics of the proposal of the group of four would do well to remember that the genesis of that proposal was the report of the High-level Panel and Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) and the Secretary-General's own report "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005). It is currently the only proposal on the table — a proposal that takes into account the interests of all groups and regions, large and small, within the United Nations system and that ensures a win-win outcome for every Member State. The other proposals either are for preserving the status quo or, even if they acknowledge merit in the group-of-four logic favouring an expansion in both categories, seek to achieve expansion on a narrow and restricted basis, without elaborating on either intent or content.

Most important, the proposal of the group of four seeks to change the structure of the Security Council — a structure that is outdated and has hitherto militated against the interests of the developing countries, which constitute the majority of the Member States of the Organization. And it is only by changing its structure and breaking the charmed circle of permanent members that it will be possible to change the policies and political culture of the Security Council.

We are not trying to carve into stone reform that is static. On the contrary, through the inclusion of the review clause, new permanent members would be held accountable for their performance. Should that be found inadequate in the opinion of the wider membership, the situation would be entirely subject to change. In other words, the General Assembly, which we are seeking to revitalize, would continue to be the master of the reform process being undertaken.

It has often been argued that Security Council reform will overshadow some of the other critical issues set out in the Secretary-General's report. That is simply contradicted by the facts. We did not introduce the draft resolution during the discussions on the outcome document, and, like other delegations, we engaged intensively in the debate. The issue of

development, far from being diluted, has been the centre of focus and will remain so. We are prepared to travel the entire distance on that vital issue, in solidarity with developing countries.

The model and the process of Security Council reform that we are proposing would exercise a beneficial influence on overall reform by strengthening the General Assembly and by removing — or at least reducing — concerns about unjust legislation or the unfair use of human rights. Alternative models do not provide that synergy. We are as wary of artificial deferrals as others may be of artificial deadlines.

I would also like to deal with some of the arguments that were put forward yesterday and especially today. Our critics wish to square the circle in traditional mathematics: they wish to increase the Security Council's efficiency and authority and to improve its working methods, but without breaking the charmed circle of the permanent five. Efficiency is not an arithmetical or managerial concept; it is a function of optimal and just decisions. Authority comes from wide acceptability of decisions perceived to be fair and just. These cannot be achieved without the contribution of new permanent members. And how does one improve working methods without mandating new permanent members to do so and holding them accountable if they do not?

To do something decisively that has been carefully thought out and discussed is considered a sign of immaturity, but that is characteristic of youth impatient for change. To postpone and do nothing is perhaps a sign of maturity, but it is equally a sign of old age and decrepitude. In that sense, maturity would also ensure consensus.

We are equally unswerving in supporting the representation of African countries; the only difference is that we do not swerve when it comes to their permanent membership.

Our critics say that since the reform that we are proposing is likely to be vetoed by some of the permanent five, it is a fruitless dead end. We believe that a decision taken thrice by the General Assembly through a two-thirds majority cannot be politically vetoed. It is not a dead end, but a barrier that has to be broken through so that, from the dead end that it has almost reached, the General Assembly is resurrected and revitalized as the most powerful universal body of the United Nations. Our critics add that their reform model is better because it would be ratified by the permanent five. Precisely for that reason, it would be worse for the General Assembly.

In a discussion with friends from the African Union a few weeks back, I quoted a nineteenth-century thinker who favoured radical reform — reform that is permitted by reason and not permitted by the police. Our critics offer us reform that is permitted by the police and not permitted by reason. Their logic is incomprehensible. President Truman spoke of the noble purposes of the United Nations. But as the records of the Potsdam Conference show, he also inaugurated the cold war. No wonder, therefore, that it is our critics who ultimately praise Caesar. We continue to bury him.

It is quite clear that our critics therefore continue to support the dominance of the current power structure. They speak of the ethics of the United Nations and of national elections, on which the group-of-four countries hardly require any lessons. According to those critics, permanent members with the veto, permanent members without the veto and non-permanent members would constitute three unmanageable and in fact unequal tiers, but the continued dominance of the permanent five and the proposed 20 non-permanent members would form one happy, equal family.

According to that logic, the small States that co-sponsored our resolution do not know their own interests. A small State elected once in 40 years is represented, but a small State that benefits from increased policy and political space and that participates every day in the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council does not get any representation or benefit at all, according to their logic. An election after which the record of non-permanent members is not examined is accountability, but a stringent review holding new permanent members accountable is lack of accountability.

Most astonishing of all is the complete reinterpretation of the African Union (AU) summit. Not providing for one more non-permanent seat makes the proposal of the group of four totally incompatible with AU positions, but denying both permanent seats to the AU makes the Uniting for Consensus proposal fully compatible. The group of four is saying that the question of the veto should be discussed after 15 years; the AU is saying that it should be discussed now. But our critics say that the AU is not really committed to the veto at all — that it does not really want the veto,

but something entirely different. That, surely, is to reinterpret the Ezulwini Consensus and the AU summit and to claim to know the minds of the African Union better than the Union itself.

Moreover, if continued presence is proposed — I am not very good at citing statistics, and probably not as good at mathematics as the members of Uniting for Consensus — then the arithmetical effect on other seats would be much worse, even arithmetically, than that of the proposal of the group of four. One need not reiterate that, in any case, the political effect would be much worse, because there would not be increased policy or political space, and there would not be participation in the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council.

One of the Uniting for Consensus countries also "warned" the group of four. We are at a loss to know whether that was a friendly indication of a danger to be avoided or a threat to be heeded. Anyway, that completely unselfish and fruitful travesty of logic is dressed up as a total absence of national ambition and as total concern for the welfare of the general membership.

One of the five permanent members has also said that it would like there to be 20 or 20-plus members of the Security Council. I merely wanted to remark on the striking arithmetical coincidence.

It was said also that the status of the permanent five should not be diluted. I would have imagined that, surely, that is the whole point — that we have to dilute the status of the permanent five through the creation of new permanent seats in order to break the charmed circle and reach decisions acceptable to the broad majority of the general membership.

Another permanent member has also said that this would be divisive — and this has been said by the Uniting for Consensus group as well — that there should be, in fact, a broad-based agreement. Now, how does one find out whether there is a broad-based agreement? Because, surely, a broad-based agreement is not a figment of the imagination. It has to be determined, through a process of voting, whether or not there is a broad-based agreement.

It was also mentioned that such decisions require the support of two thirds of the Assembly. We entirely agree with this. That is exactly what we are proposing — that a similar decision on Charter change, on changing the structure of the Security Council, should require the support of two thirds of the general membership of the United Nations.

It was said that this should be part of a package, but the point is, as the Secretary-General has advised us, that the package does not imply that decisions should not be taken by voting if there is no consensus, or should not be taken early. In fact, the clear advice is that decisions on this vital issue should be taken early, precisely in order to use the synergy, to which I referred, with the other aspects of Security Council reform.

It was also said that there should be effectiveness, but, again, as I have argued earlier, effectiveness is not an arithmetical constant. It is, I repeat, a question of the optimality of the decisions to which developing countries and others contribute and their acceptability. That is what makes the body effective — not arithmetic, not management.

Similarly, it has been said that States that have the capacity should be there. Now who is to judge whether a State has the capacity? Surely it is the General Assembly. Who else is going to judge whether a State has the capacity? In any case, if the criteria that are being proposed had been adopted in 1945, half the membership of the permanent five would not be there.

In conclusion, I think that a permanent member said that this draft resolution would not strengthen the United Nations and therefore urged the General Assembly to oppose it and to vote against it. The General Assembly has to make up its mind. Does it want to revitalize itself? Because, if it does, the choice is very clear: it should, in fact, vote, and not go by consensus. It should take a vote, and it should vote in favour of the group of four's draft resolution.

Finally, I will return to the point that I began with — the whole issue of the group of four hurtling down the road with this draft resolution in undue haste. Quite clearly, the facts, as I have shown, prove otherwise. We have painstakingly worked with Member States and regional groups on a reform package that we believe will serve the interests of all. We have respected the wishes of the African Union and of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which had urged us to submit our draft resolution after the summits in Libya and Saint Lucia. We will continue to negotiate and engage with those groups, tomorrow and in the coming days — on Saturday and on Sunday — in keeping with the spirit of the Brussels statement and

the London Declaration, and with the other Member States and other regional groupings.

Even as we do so, we appeal to them — to our brothers in the African Union and CARICOM — for their support and understanding, in our joint endeavour to give the developing countries the due and rightful place in the highest echelons of decision-making in the United Nations that has hitherto been denied to them. We would also appeal to all Member States to seize this rare opportunity to usher in reform and change, which we are convinced are needed — and today's statements have convinced me even more — if the United Nations is to represent an effective and genuine multilateralism in the truest sense of the term.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Algeria, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Baali** (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Given the lateness of the hour, I will take far less than the 10 minutes you have given me.

The representative of Germany has lately taken an inappropriate stance with respect to Algeria's position. He seems to be the only not to understand it, and he seems to want to create confusion in that respect. I shall therefore reiterate what I said yesterday in this Hall. I hope that, after these explanations, the representative of Germany will no longer have any questions.

As the representative of Germany is aware, Algeria played a major role in the initiating, drafting and adoption, at the Sirte summit, of an African draft resolution, sponsored by all African States, which will be officially submitted tomorrow. That draft resolution is not, apparently, to the taste of the representative of Germany, who would have liked Africa to support the draft resolution put forward by the group of four, even if it meant dividing itself. But not only was Africa not divided; it surprised the rest of the world by adopting a common position and by coming here, unified, to defend it within the United Nations. That African draft is our draft, and, as I said yesterday, we cannot support any other draft — only this one.

I hope that this clarification will answer once and for all any questions that the representative of Germany may have.

My delegation considers that the draft resolution submitted by the group of four is absolutely unacceptable and incompatible with the legitimate interests and aspirations of Africa, as put forward at Ezulwini and confirmed at Sirte. Algeria — unlike certain countries, which are ready to make any and all concessions simply to realize an ambition bordering on obsession — is not prepared to settle for cut-rate — I repeat, cut-rate — permanent seats.

For that reason, my delegation will vote against the draft resolution submitted by the group of four if it is put to the vote and in turn calls on all States — African States in particular — to vote against that text.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker. I think that we must continue our consultations on this question. I will inform the Assembly as soon as possible as to how we will proceed next.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of consideration of agenda item 53.

**Programme of work**

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I would like to inform members that the General Assembly will hold a plenary meeting on Thursday, 14 July 2005, in the afternoon, to resume consideration of the following agenda items: sub-item (g) of agenda item 56, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States", to take action on draft resolution A/59/L.16/Rev.1; sub-item (b) of agenda item 85, "Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States", to take action on draft resolution A/59/L.63; sub-item (b) of agenda item 105, "Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms", to take action on draft resolution A/59/L.65; and agenda item 113, "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", to take action on draft resolution A/59/L.66.

*The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.*